

Hearing God's Voice

One of the most important aspects of a believer's walk with God is the ability to hear His voice. This will save us many heartaches and many pitfalls. God wants to speak to us, and He is continually speaking to us to give us direction, but many of us are not listening.

God is always speaking. He is not talkative, but He is always communicating with us. It is not a matter that He is not speaking. It's a matter of us not tuning in, listening, and understanding. Are you listening? There is always the signal of His voice.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:" —John 10:27

- i) This passage says, my sheep my voice. It doesn't say they will, can or may hear, but rather that they do hear. Period. This is definitive statement.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. —John 10:14

- i) This says that God's sheep know Him and knowing Him includes knowing His voice.

There are two main types of guidance:

- a) General guidance. This general guidance is more like God's general voice that is clearly laid out in the Word for all to see and all to know.
 - i) God gives us the general will of God for us in every area—spiritually and naturally.
 - ii) Psalm 119:105—The Word.
 - Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
 - iii) Disobeying the general guidance/will in the Word will hinder us from receiving the specific will or guidance. Hearing God's voice starts with hearing Him through the general guidance. Before we receive specific guidance, we need to be in tune, following and obeying the general guidance.

If we want to hear the voice of God, we need to be willing to obey. Not obeying the Lord hardens our hearts to the Lord and His voice to a point that even though God is speaking, we cannot hear Him.

iv) Examples of God's general guidance are:

- Thanksgiving

1 Thessalonians 5:18 *In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

- Sanctification—abstaining from fornication

1 Thessalonians 4:3 *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:*

- Renewing our mind

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.* And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

- Not willing that any perish

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

b) Specific guidance

i) This is through the Holy Spirit.

- Example: Thessalonians 3:10 tells us to **work**, but it doesn't say where or what, but it is the Holy Spirit who tells us where to work and what. This is specific guidance.
- Another example is marriage. The word of God (general guidance) encourages us to marry and teaches us to marry only the opposite sex. However, it doesn't tell us to marry anyone or who to marry specifically apart from the general guidance that we should marry a believer in the Lord (2 Corinthians 6:14). It is the Holy Spirit that gives us those specifics—who to marry and when.

A. God's Word

God's Word is the number one-way God speaks and leads us. We should desire to have God speak to us through His written Word. As we study and read, we should be expecting God to speak to us. **If God does not primarily speak to you through His Word, then you are not a Word person.** This is the number one way He speaks, and we should all hear Him this way above any other way.

According to Hebrews 1:1-2, we see that God has changed or upgraded the way He speaks to us. Unlike in the past He is speaking to us through and by His Son, Jesus, But John 1:1 says Jesus is the Word. This therefore concludes to mean that God speaks to us through the Word unlike the sundry times when He spoke through the prophets, fleeces, and even donkeys.

This is the most reliable way God speaks to us.

- a) Luke 24:32 *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*
 - i) He (God) **talks** to us while He opens **the scriptures (The Word)**. We need to be in the Word if we want Him to talk to us.
 - ii) God's voice = God's Word. There is no and there should be no voice louder than the Word of God. God's written Word is God's Audible voice.
 - iii) No voice is better than God's Word.
- b) Psalms 119:104-105 *"Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."*
- c) The primary way God speaks to us is through His word. Whenever we think we have heard from God, we must give that "word" **an acid test of the word**. If it fails to pass the word test, then it is not God, period. I don't care how it sounds or feels.
- d) God will NEVER EVER violate His word. Psalm 138:2 *says "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."*
- e) Notice that John 10:27 says that **we do know and do hear God's voice**. It doesn't say we can know, or we should know, but **we know**. It doesn't say we can hear, or we will hear, but we do hear His voice.
- f) As you read the Word, you will receive a "Rhema" word. This is a word that is quickened to you, jumps off the page as you read, and speaks directly to you and/or your situation.

g) Proverbs 11:3 *The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.*

i) Integrity will guide us. If we walk in integrity, we have guidance from the Lord, because God's voice and direction will be one of integrity.

We need to filter all guidance through the Word of God.

B. Spirit

It is important to understand that we are a spirit being. When God speaks to us, He speaks to our spirit man who then communicates to us soul and mind.

a) John 4:24 *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."*

b) God speaks to our spirits. He is a Spirit, and when He communicates to us, He does it Spirit to Spirit. And since we are one Spirit with the Lord (1 Corinthians 6:17), our born-again Spirit is the very Spirit of God. So, God communicates to the Spirit of God in us. He doesn't communicate to us mouth to mouth, ear to ear or brain to brain like in the physical or emotional realm.

i) This is not mouth to mouth, ear to ear, or brain to brain.

c) When I was young, I used to think that when the Word says we were created in God's image, it was speaking of our physical appearance rather than the spirit man. I therefore concluded that God was an ugly beautiful person.

C. Faith

One of the hindrances to hearing God's voice is unbelief. Some do not believe that they hear or have heard God's voice. Just like our daily walk with God in all aspects of life, **it takes faith to hear God's voice.** We live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4).

Everything in the kingdom of God operates on faith. Healing speaking in tongues, salvation, deliverance, provision, hearing God's voice—everything!

We have to step out in faith and believe that we are being led and have heard God's voice, and, on many occasions, we will get confirmation that that is true. Of course, this voice should not and cannot violate the written Word of God.

a) Romans 14:23b *"...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."*

- i) We have to be decisive when we hear God. We have to step out and act on what we believe God has spoken to us by faith.
- b) Inaction is no excuse. Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God. So, we have to step out and act in faith.
- c) If it does not require faith, you did not hear God's voice. One of the reasons we do not hear God is because we removed the faith factor in the equation of hearing God's voice.
- d) God's voice will always require faith. Everything about the Kingdom of God requires and is about faith. God does not or never speak to us in a way that removes faith. It always takes and will take faith to hear God's voice. We hear God by faith.
- e) James says and believes he has heard the voice of God concerning getting a new job. Grace also says and believes she heard the voice of God and then steps out and begins to take action believing God she has heard God. Who of the two do you believe truly heard God's voice? James or Grace?

D. Heart Desires

One of the ways we hear God's voice, or we can be led by God is through our heart desires. Most believers have no clue that on some occasions it is the Lord leading them through their heart desires, but this is true, and it happens more often than not. This is one of the most predominant way God leads or speaks to us.

- a) Psalm 37:4 *"Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."*
- b) This does not apply to a person who has not been seeking the Lord. To trust and follow the desires of your heart, you must be in continual fellowship with God, not your flesh. If you aren't careful, then your flesh and/or the devil could speak to you through your desires.
- c) You must be delighting yourself in the Lord. To *"delight"* comes from the Hebrew Word *"ANAG"* which means *"to be soft and pliable"* (Strong's Concordance). It is saying that we must soften and make our hearts sensitive towards the Lord. This doesn't just happen automatically. It takes lots of effort. If our hearts aren't soft and sensitive towards the Lord, we should never DO whatever we want.
- d) This is not saying that God will give us whatever we want. It is saying that when we delight (soft and pliable) ourselves in the Lord, He will change our heart

desires to be identical to His and will meet those desires. In other words, he will place His desires into our hearts, and we will have God's desires.

- e) Ungodly desires in our hearts are an indication of the hardness and insensitivity of our hearts towards the Lord.
 - i) If you have a desire and you aren't sure it's the Lord, back off, pray, and fast. If that desire stays and gets stronger, this could be a clear indication that the Lord is speaking to you.
- f) Mr. Andrew Wommack says he made some of the major decisions in his life by using this pattern. He followed the desires of his heart to go on T.V and the same to build one of the best Bible colleges in the world—Charis Bible college.

As we seek God (delight in Him), He puts godly desires in our hearts. Those desires are His plan, will, and direction. They are constant and persistent.

Maybe you are asking yourself, why am I not hearing anything significant? "If you are praying and seeking Me and you don't hear anything specific it is because you already have My mind on the matter. I trust you. Do what you feel is best in your heart." – Pastor Greg Mohr

- i) Again, this is for those who are delighting themselves in the Lord.

E. "Seemer"

Another one of the ways we hear God's voice, or we can be led by God is through our seemer. This is something that seems good to us. Most believers have no clue that on some occasions it is the Lord leading them when something seems good to them, but this is true, and it happens more often than not.

- a) Luke 1:1-4 *"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; **It seemed good to me** also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."*
 - i) Being led by your "seamer" is best for a person who is seeking after the Lord continually. This will not work well for carnal people. Proverbs 14:12 says *"There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of Death."*

- ii) Luke wrote the book of Luke by simply following his “seemer”—what seemed good to him. This does not say he heard an audible voice from God or a vision.
- b) Acts 15:25 *“It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,”*
- c) Acts 15:28 *“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;”*

F. “Pleaser”

This is more like the previous one (seemer). Another one of the ways we hear God’s voice, or we can be led by God is through our “pleaser”. This is something that pleases us.

- a) Acts 15:22 *“Then **pleased** it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:”*
- b) Acts 15:34 *“Notwithstanding it **pleased** Silas to abide there still.”*
 - i) Shortly after the conference in Jerusalem where they apostles made a decision not to trouble the Gentiles with the keeping of the law, they sent chosen men in their company to the Gentiles in Antioch and other parts. These men included Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and Judas. After they got to Antioch, they delivered the epistle (letter) after reading it to the people. After they ad stayed there for quite some time, they were finally let go in peace back to the Apostles.
 - ii) Silas stayed there. The Bible says, “it pleased him to abide there still.”
 - iii) Paul and Barnabas continued on teaching and preaching the Word of the Lord with others also.
 - iv) After a while when Paul and Barnabas could not agree about taking John Mark with them on their missionary trip Paul citing a reason that he had forsaken them in the first at Pamphylia as they went about the work of the Lord. Paul having contention that was so sharp with Barnabas, they chose to part ways. Paul at this time had no travel partner.
 - v) However, at this time Silas was still in Antionch having been pleased to stay, Paul chose Silas to be his traveling companion. The Word does not say that Silas heard the voice of God but imply followed what pleased him which was to abide in Antioch longer. In other words, by simply

following his “**pleaser**,” he was in the right place at the right time.

G. Inner Witness

When God speaks to us, one of the ways is through an inner witness of the Holy Spirit. The inner witness is the number one-way God leads His children into His specific will. What is a witness? It is simply a thing or voice that furnishes evidence or proof. The inner witness will eliminate all other voices. This could be a voice that is repetitive and comes with a strong conviction. It can also be a strong conviction about something.

Romans 8:16-17 *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”*

- a) The Holy Spirit will bear witness to His will, the things that He wants us to see and know through our spirit man. Somethings will bear witness while others will not.
- b) This witness could be for or against something—a red light or green light. It could be a **check** in your spirit, an impression, or a thought. Have you ever had a thought that comes randomly?

A “NO” can be the voice of God in many cases however, not all “NO”s are the same. Some “No’s are NO NEVER, while others are “NO,” not yet.

- c) When God speaks to you, it will bear witness with your spirit man. There will be a Spirit to spirit connection. He is not bearing witness with our eyes, minds, etc. but our spirit.
- d) Proverbs 20:27 *“The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.”*

H. Peace

Isaiah 55:12 *For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with **peace**: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.*

This is one of the primary keys to being led by God, hearing, and following His direction. Nothing should be worth taking our peace. We need our peace to function soberly and make sound judgment. Something that takes your peace away has to be put on the shelf, dropped, or ignored. If peace is gone, it is time to back off.

Sometimes we take the discomfort of the flesh to be the voice of God. Sometimes we

are being stretched and there tends to be a lack of “peace.” On many occasions that is the **flesh** that is **screaming** for not **wanting to change or suffer any loss**, not the voice of God.

- a) Colossians 3:15 *“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”*
 - i) The Word “Rule” here means “to act as an umpire” (Strong’s concordance). An umpire helps decide or determine the direction of a point. Whether the point is in bounds or outbounds, positive or negative, green light to a point or red light to a point.
 - ii) Peace is God’s umpire for making decisions.
- b) God speaks to us and leads us through the peace in your hearts.
- c) We need to consider all the options. Many wrong decisions have been made because not all the options were considered but don't let fear rule out God's possibilities. Use your imagination to explore what will happen with each choice you are taking.
- d) Where do you have **the most peace**? God will always lead you in the direction where you have the most peace. Follow the peace of God. Discern **the greater peace** as you consider the option the Lord would have you take. In your spirit, there will be **total peace** over the right choice, but we aren't always totally in the Spirit, and it is not unusual for some turmoil to exist.
- e) **Peace is the timing of what God what’s to do. Don’t violate the peace. Passion is the “what.”**
 - i) Purchase of a car or house, loans, the spouse you marry, etc. for every single decision you will make, God will be there speaking to you.
- f) Psalm 85:8 *I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.*
 - i) God speaks peace, not chaos or confusion to His people. If we are seeking God and we hear peace, God is speaking to us. Peace is His language.

I. Passion

One of the other primary ways to hear the voice of God is through our **passion**. What are you passionate about? What are you excited about or joyful about?

Isaiah 55:12 *For ye shall go out with **joy**, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.*

- a) The **joy** spoken about in this verse that we go out with is more like passion. We have joy in what we have passion for.
- b) Remember not to get out only because of passion and leave peace behind. You need to remember to operate in the two "**Ps**"—**Passion and Peace**. **Passion is the what, Peace is the timing of the "what."**
- c) Most people have passion, but not peace. They tend to follow passion leaving peace behind hence miss the timing of God.

J. Heart reservations.

The definition of reservation is skepticism, unease, hesitation, hesitancy, reluctance.

Heart reservations could be things that you get to know that just bring about certain reservations in your heart. They are more like red flags. This is a crucial way God warns us and can lead us to go a different direction by revealing some information to us that would bring reservations. These should never be ignored.

- a) God speaks to us through certain reservations we get about making certain decisions or taking certain steps. Although not all reservations we have are God speaking to us, we must take time and think through things. Proverbs 4:26 *"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."*
- b) Never neglect nor go against the reservations in your heart (Genesis 27:1-30). Never do it. It is not worth the pain and heartache that will eventually follow.
- c) Never force yourself (1 Samuel 13:12) to do something that you have a reservation or red flag on. Do not force things. Forcing of things indicates we are out of grace and headed for disgrace.
- d) Pressure should never be a voice you follow. You should never act out of pressure from someone or others. If you have to miss out on something that requires you to act out of pressure, so be it. **God does not pressure us into a decision. Pressure is not God.** This is a reason enough to back off and not act.

K. Kingdom Protocol

The kingdom of God has a protocol. There are certain things we have to be looking for to confirm the voice of God and His direction to us.

- a) Romans 14:17 *“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”*
 - i) Righteousness
 - ii) Peace
 - iii) Joy

- b) James 3:17 *“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”* KJV
 - i) God’s voice will lead us in a direction and wisdom that fulfills that is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated (willing to yield), full of mercy, good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy.

- c) God’s kind of love
 - i) 1 Corinthians 13:3-8 *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4 Charity **suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.***
 - ii) God’s voice is a voice of love. If the voice you are hearing violates the God’s kind of love principles, it ain’t God.
 - iii) For instance, if someone came and told me that they have met a lady that they want to get married to in the next 8 weeks and tell me how much he loves her. I will listen but will hardly agree. Why? Because God’s voice and God’s love is patient. This is too fast. If it is God that is speaking to you, He will not violate His kind of love which is patient. I could argue that this young man is rather on heat than in love. Definitely, not God’s kind of love.

- iv) If another one comes and tells me that he wants to marry another person's spouse, I know already that it is not the voice of God, why? God's voice never violates the principle of His kind of love. God's kind of love envies not and does not rejoice in iniquity. It is not God.

Every so-called voice of God must pass the love test.

L. Still small voice.

God's voice is not usually a big audible voice. Some have heard that voice but that is always occasional and not the norm. God typically speaks to us in a still small voice on the inside of us. This voice is always in line with God's Word and springs off of the Word of God. A still small voice on the inside of us will be as a result of being in the Word or studying and meditating on the Word.

a) Psalm 46:10 *"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."*

i) The word *"Still"* comes from a Hebrew word that was translated *"slacken"* This is talking about slowing down, calming down, being quiet, *"step out of traffic"* (MSG).

ii) We have to be still many times for us to hear the voice of God. There are voices in our daily life that do compete with the voice of God. We need to create an environment to allow ourselves to hear God's voice.

iii) One of the reasons we can't hear God's still voice is because we are so busy with life and affairs of this life. We have no time for God.

- We are busy Lord, can't you see? We must deliberately get quiet. I mean quiet.
- Turn off that television, radio, and any sort of noise and be still. You will hear God's voice. God doesn't yell!

b) 1 Kings 19:12 *"And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."*

i) God is not always in the spectacular nor dramatic. Here in this situation, God was not in the earthquake nor in the fire but was in the very unexpected—a still small voice.

- c) This is not talking about a loud audible voice, but rather a voice deep inside our spirit.

Still small voice—comes to us in 3 primary ways:

- Strong knowing or inward witness. This is a form of a still small voice. A quickening, bearing witness.
- Desires in your heart. While seeking God, He puts His desires in your heart. This is a form of a still small voice.
- Peace—This is a form of a still small voice. Psalm 85:8 *I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.*

Secondary ways God speaks to us or we can hear the voice of God.

Again, none of these is more reliable than God's written Word. We should not be seeking these means. We have a better way—which is the Word. The Word of God is "A better way to hear God's Voice."

M. Visions, Dreams, Audible voice.

God also speaks to us through other means such as visions, dreams or audible voice. These are secondary means not primary means of God speaking to us. These should never replace the Word of God.

- a) We should not **seek** visions, dreams, audible voice, and so forth. All these are secondary forms of God leading us. We ought to solely depend on the Word of God and the inner witness as God's primary way to be led by Him. If the Word of God is not sufficient, nothing else will.
- b) We may be invited into certain dimensions of the Spirit realm, but **we should never seek it.**
- c) God does not primarily speak to me through visions or dreams, but rather through His Word. As I'm studying His Word, He speaks to me. I say that if God speaks to you mostly through dreams not the Word, you sleep a lot (Just kidding!). We should desire God to speak to us through His Word more than anything else.

Examples:

- i) Paul, (2 Corinthians 12:4) was caught up into the heavens. He did not go into the heavens. He was caught there not went there. He was invited there.
- ii) **John** in the book of Revelation saw an open door which was a sign of invitation. He never sought it. He was invited into it. Revelation 4:1 “come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.
- iii) **We should stop looking for the spectacular or dramatic.** Pay attention to your intuition—feelings, impressions, and thoughts.

N. Prophecy

Another way God speaks to us or we can hear His voice is through for instance prophecy or other gifts of the Spirit. **Prophecy is simply an inspired word from God in a known tongue that is meant to edify, exhort, and comfort.**

The Word of God is clear about NOT despising prophecy (**1 Thessalonians 5:20** “Despise not prophesyings). One of the ways God speaks to us or we can hear God’s voice is through the operation of Spiritual Gifts.

- a) I Corinthians 12:1 “Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. “
- b) I Corinthians 14:3 “*But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.*”

There are three major checks to prophesy or a word of Prophecy:

- i) Edification
- ii) Exhortation
- iii) Comfort

O. Spiritual Authorities

1 Peter 4:8-11 “*And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*”

- a) Sometimes God will use spiritual authorities such as pastors, teachers, elders, evangelist, and so forth to speak into our lives. God does and will give us direction through them. However, there is a balance that has to be met with this. No leader is infallible. No leader is to be obeyed in this regard without any questions.

- i) They are not the final authority, but they can be a witness and a blessing.
- ii) We need to keep this in mind concerning counsel. No leader is infallible.

P. Godly Counsel

This is advice or prudence that could come from another person or God's Word. This is another way God can lead or speak to us. We should be cautious who we choose to receive counsel from, and definitely not the ungodly (Psalm 1:1-3).

We should seek counsel in certain areas which will help us hear God's voice and direction. God speaks through counsel and the Word encourages counsel.

- a) We have to be cautious not to get counsel from the ungodly (Psalm 1:1-3)
 - i) Proverbs 11:14 *Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*
 - ii) Proverbs 15:22 *Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.*
 - iii) Proverbs 19:20 *Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.*
 - iv) Proverbs 20:5 *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.*
 - v) Proverbs 20:18 *Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.*
 - vi) Psalm 73:24 *"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."*

When you make decisions outside counsel, you could lose influence and trust especially if the decisions turn out to be those that are very sensitive. Counsel establishes a pathway and a process to give to make sound decisions. I recommend a book by Pastor Greg Mohr called—*Walking in Wisdom*.

Below are crucial points to note about God speaking to us and hearing His voice.

A. Clarity

- a) **When God speaks, He speaks clearly.** You will know that you know that you know. If it's blurry, make sure that you get clarity. Pray in the Spirit, study the Word, seek God's direction. **God is the best communicator ever.** He will communicate to us clearly not vaguely or in a foggy way. 1 Timothy 4:1 says the Spirit speaks expressly—**clearly**.
- b) I believe God speaks and knows every language and dialect on earth. When He speaks to you, **He will speak the language you understand.** He will not sound like someone else, but I believe the voice of **God sounds like you—your voice.**
 - i) In Acts 26:14, Paul says God spoke to him in the Hebrew tongue. Since God spoke Hebrew, He speaks any other language. Why would God speak to Paul in Hebrew? Why not Italian, Spanish or even English? He spoke the language Paul would understand. God speaks so that we can understand and follow Him.

B. Emotion and flesh or the voice of God.

Sometimes when we are being stretched, we take that discomfort to change to mean we have no peace. Change, whether forced or not can bring negative emotional effects. Internal and external resistance to change will come.

Sometimes Christians mistake their feelings of resistance as the voice of God telling them not to change. Feelings of resistance can be a sign that you are on the right track.

How do you discern if it is the voice of God or it is the flesh and emotion?

a) The Word

Example:

- i) When it comes to things like relationships, we have to remember that God's kind love is patient, doesn't behave itself unseemly.
- ii) Marrying the unbeliever is against the Word of God (2 Corinthians 6:14) regardless of how we feel. We should not make our decisions based on our emotions. **Emotions are real but aren't always true.** We should never be led by our emotions. They are unstable and unpredictable.
- iii) God's voice is always persistent and consistent.

b) Spending Time with the Lord

- i) 2 Peter 1:17-18 *For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*** (Emphasis mine)
- ii) Matthew 17:5 says, *“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”*
 - When we are with the Lord (Mark 3:14), we hear His voice. One of the reasons we do not hear the Lord is because we aren’t with Him. We aren’t spending time with Him. Peter, John, and James were spending time with the Lord, so they were able to hear God’s voice. Spending time with the Lord is key to hearing God’s voice.

c) Fasting and prayer

- i) Spending time with the Lord through studying the Word, fasting, and prayer will cause the flesh to be subdued and we will hear the voice of God clearer.
 - ii) Fasting should have one of its crucial goals as to hear the God.
- d) Godly counsel from trusted mature men and women of God.
- i) **Counsel** should help confirm or unconfirm what God is speaking to you, not to tell you what to do especially on major decisions.

C. Confirmation.

One of the mistakes many believers make is to seek for confirmation. We should not seek confirmation or fast and pray for it. Confirmation comes anyway as we align ourselves with the Word. God will always confirm His Word. There is no scripture that tells us to seek God or pray for confirmation.

- a) God confirms His Word (Mark 16:20). I believe when He speaks to us, He will confirm it.

- i) We should be careful not to be seeking confirmation. We should seek the Lord and His Word and confirmation will come. God will give us confirmation, but it is unwise to be seeking it. If we do, we are seeking the wrong thing and we could be easily misled.
 - ii) Does it align with God's Word? Is it Christ-exalting or self-promoting? Does it manifest the flesh or the Spirit of God? Are our heart motives pure? Does my mentor or someone I believe is spiritually mature agree to it? Does it require faith?
- b) I have noticed that when God speaks to us, we must step out by faith and follow God's Word. As we step out in faith, confirmation comes but we should not be putting out fleeces like Gideon before the Lord (Judges 6:36-40), audible voices, tinglings, and so forth so as to get confirmation.

Conclusion

Whenever God speaks to us, and we know that we know that He has, it doesn't always mean that things will come to pass with no trouble or resistance. Sometimes you hear God, but the other person involved did not hear Him. This could hinder the results and manifestations of what God wants to do.

I will give you a simple life experience: One time, God spoke to me, and I took some steps in the direction of getting a position God had placed in my heart. Actually, before that, I had been approached about the upcoming job position. It was a part-time job, and I was working fulltime in a different role. I prayed, and I felt that the Lord was leading me in that direction of taking that new position even if it were part-time at that time. I took some steps to get this job but didn't get it. God had spoken to me, and I fully knew it, but it never materialized. I still believe I heard God correctly even as I write this but it never happened.

The point of this is that when God speaks to you, it doesn't automatically come to pass or always come to pass especially if there are other parties or people involved. In some cases, God's Word and will are dependent on other people to come to pass even after you have heard God.